



## **EDWARD JOHN BAIGENT (TED)**

Edward was the son of Joseph and Charlotte White Baigent, (nee Taylor) of Wakefield, Nelson. He was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 1893. A more complete biography of this extensive family and the family tree are available on the Museum website.

### **PRE WAR**

From the age of fourteen Edward helped to run the farm under the guidance of his Mother and Steve Price. As War became a reality he, with others, canvassed the district for volunteers.

### **WORLD WAR 1 SERVICE**

Ted's duty in the Forces commenced on 12 September 1914. His serial number was 6/752 and his rank was Private.

Ted embarked as part of the Main Body on 16 October 1914 on HMNZT 4 or HMNZT 11, either the "Tahiti" or "Athenic" from Lyttleton. His unit was the Canterbury Infantry Battalion. (An article in the paper many years later stated that he had travelled aboard the "Athenic"). The two transports arrived at Suez, Egypt on 3 December.

Ted was at the landing of Gallipoli where *"the Australian division began landing at first light on Sunday, 25 April, 13 miles north of Cape Helles, on a rocky shore fit for mountain goats, clambering upwards under fire. Companies and battalions soon became hopelessly intermingled and, when the New Zealand Infantry Brigade began to reinforce the left at noon the situation was highly confused. The Auckland Battalion came in first, through a curtain of Turkish shrapnel, then two companies of the Canterbury Battalion, and then the Otago Battalion. All were at once dispatched to the front where they were hotly engaged"*. (Source-teara.govt.nz).

Ted fought at Gallipoli for four months and was wounded in August 1915 at the Dardanelles.

On 5 March 1916 he was appointed Temporary Corporal with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Canterbury Infantry Regiment.

Ted was admitted to hospital at 'Grey Towers' on 13 June 1916 but his records do not say what for. 'Grey Towers' was selected to be the first

Command Depot for the New Zealand Contingent in England. After the first major actions involving New Zealand troops on the Western Front, large numbers of wounded began arriving during the months of April and May 1916. At this time it was decided that it should be used for a hospital instead.

In late January 1917 Ted was appointed Temporary Sergeant and then promoted to Sergeant on the same day. Ted qualified as an Instructor in Muskets, 2<sup>nd</sup> class on 2 March 1917 and in July he sailed to New Zealand on the "Ionic" on duty as a Sergeant Instructor in Muskets. He was posted to the 12<sup>th</sup> Nelson Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Canterbury Regiment.

Ted was awarded the Gallipoli Badge and the Gallipoli Medallion and was discharged from service on 12 December 1918.

### **POST WAR**

After being discharged Ted returned to farming and he and his brother Harold bought an undeveloped block of land at Paerata in Opotiki and broke it in.

Ted married on 9 April 1934 to Florence Marjorie Holloway at Auckland. Florence was the daughter of Frank and Florence Holloway, and was born in 1901.

Having established the farm Ted then turned to community service and was the Director of Opotiki Dairy in 1955. He was also involved with the Opotiki Bacon Company and a member of the Opotiki Hospital Board. He served on the committee of the Red Cross, the Rehabilitation and the National Party. He was a member of the Opotiki Patriotic Welfare Committee when it was formed in 1940 and was Chairman for 19 years. He was also a representative on the Bay of Plenty Patriotic Council for about 30 years.

Ted's main interest was the New Zealand Returned Serviceman Association and the welfare of returned soldiers. He had first joined the RSA in Nelson in August 1918 and was a member for 55 years. He served on the committee of the Opotiki branch of the RSA and was its President for sixteen years. For services to the Association he was awarded the RSA Gold Star which was presented by Lieutenant-General Sir Howard Kippenberger in October 1948.

Ted was a keen sportsman and loved fishing, both sea and fresh water. He also played golf and played in a number of veteran tournaments throughout the Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay, Poverty Bay and Waikato. At his death he was the Patron of the Opotiki Golf Club.

Ted died 31 July 1973 at the age of 80 and was buried in Opotiki.  
Florence died on 15 February 1985 and was buried in the same  
cemetery as Edward.

*This Biography was compiled by Robyn Parkes with help from the Baigent Family.*